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3. The formation of local funds for making local improvements

Mr. V. S. Krishna Pillai (Member, Thiruvalla taluk) observed that a proposal was put forward so far back as 3(years ago by the late Dewan Mr. Ramiengar to set apar certain items of the public revenue for the formation of a separate fund to be called 'local fund' independent of th general revenues of the State. The fund was to be utilized solely for expenditure on local improvements by being distri buted among the different divisions of the State in proportio to the local interests displayed. The proposal was made at a time when, without any organised body to represent loca grievances, there was a total absence of public spirit amon the people. Modern Travancore could, however, very wel boast of its various Associations and Samajams working for th social, political and material advancement of the country, th numerous organs of public opinion representing the grievance of the people, the different Town Improvement Commit tees with local officers working side by side with non-offici Members, the Legislative Council with its non-official Mem bers, and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly itself representin not only each taluk, but every interest, local or otherwi They were all indications of that awakening of a public spi among the people the absence of which Mr. Ramiengar ver much deplored. (Para 365 of his Settlement Memoran dum).

He argued that the time had come to put into effect th proposal of Mr. Ramiengar, with modifications to suit loc requirements. He, therefore, suggested the formation of local fund and a local board for every taluk for dealing wi local necessities which, according to Mr. Ramiengar, were (1 the construction and maintenance of village roads, (2 the diffusion of elementary and industrial education, (3) th construction and repair of markets, tanks and wells, (4) th planting of avenues and topes and the formation of fuel r serves where required, (5) the establishment of dispensari in places beyond the reach of State hospitals, (6) the dispensin of medicines during the prevalence of epidemics, (7) the train ing and employment of native medical practitioners and vacc nators, (8) the cleaning of roads, streets and tanks, and (9) th sanitary inspection of the towns and villages and the remov of nuisances. The Member added that, though such objec now annually consumed a significant portion of the Sta income, the people were not benefited in proportion to th expenditure incurred, that the expenditure under 'maintenanc and repairs' as now defrayed was almost a waste so far as th rural areas were concerned, that Primary education had ye to be made compulsory, that the present number of schoo was inadequate to meet the growing demand for educatio that technical education had not yet received the amount o consideration which its importance deserved, that the supply o medicines to the hospitals was poor, while nothing at all wa supplied to the Vydiasalas, that the State aid to place ravaged by smallpox and cholera reached them too late an that the sanitation of villages was absolutely neglected. Th real reason for such a state of affairs was the absence of loca interest and co-operation and the Member hoped that th measure proposed by him would produce the desired result.

As regards the funds, the Member suggested that th Government would have to make allotments to the variou taluks in proportion to the revenue each contributed and

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increase the same by curtailing the Budget expenditure under (1) grants to private schools, (2) grants to medical institutions including Vydiasalas, (3) grants to Town Improvement Committees, (4) expenditure under construction and maintenance of village roads, canals and irrigation works, and (5) cost of the Sanitary and the Vaccination Departments. The funds so raised might, in the opinion of the Member, be further increased by voluntary contributions, local cesses and income from cattle pounds and fisheries.

Proceeding next to consider the advantages that would be derived from the measure, he said that the most important of them were a healthy co-operation between the rulers and the ruled, facilities for local improvements, an impartial distribution of the Government favours to every nook and corner of the State, the advancement of the material resources of the country, a greater stimulus to make voluntary contributions and the development of a spirit of self-help among the people.

In conclusion, the Member said that the proposal of the late Dewan, Mr. Ramiengar, was in the nature of a promise, which still remained a dead letter, that now that the Revenue Settlement of the State was completed and taxes were being realized at the new rates, it was time to work up the proposal into an actuality, that other Governments like those of Mysore and Cochin had already advocated the policy underlying the proposal, and that Travancore was ripe for the introduction of the measure. He therefore requested that the Government be pleased to bestow their prompt and serious attention to the subject.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

4. The scarcity of small coins in the town of Kottayam.

Mr. C. I. Chandy (Member, Trading Classes, Kottayam) observed that the prosperity of trade and the efficiency of exchange were closely related, that the life of trade and exchange was the ease and confidence with which coins were taken in lieu of commodities, that the diffidence in any Government coin and its scarcity in the land of its jurisdiction cut at the root of public confidence in the efficiency and sympathy of the administration and that, at a time when the people enjoyed all the benefits of civilized life, easy communication and universal interdependence, the coin difficulty had permeated throughout the nooks and corners of the country, causing indescribable hardships to travellers, merchants and labourers and also to all consumers generally. The Member pointed out that the public could hardly spend a day without plenty of coin, especially small coins, and the attempt of the Government to supply copper coins to the town of Kottayam was thwarted to a very large extent by certain underdealers who made a bargain out of it. The presence of false silver coins and the cruelty with which they were defaced by the Sirkar treasuries when presented had also caused very great difficulties to the people everywhere in Travancore.

He therefore requested that the Government might be pleased to supply the two bankers in the town of Kottayam with copper exchange for two or three thousand rupees weekly, for a few months, on their application for such exchange, so that they might be enabled to circulate the cash exchange without discount through all the mercantile business

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